

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2811

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

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TAGS: PFOR, FR, XF

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT

1. THE PARIS PRESS, PREOCCUPIED WITH DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, HAS GIVEN SOMEWHAT LESS COVERAGE TO THE NEW EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI ACCORD THAN IT DESERVES. EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS BEEN WIDESPREAD, HOWEVER. IN GENERAL IT HAS CAUTIOUSLY WELCOMED THE AGREEMENT, PRAISED THE U.S. AND EGYPTIAN, AND, TO A LESSER DEGREE, ISRAELI ROLES IN ACHIEVING IT, BUT WARNED THAT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS, ESPECIALLY ON THE SYRIAN FRONT, ARE NECESSARY IF THE AGREEMENT IS TO BE RESPECTED AND LEAD TO A GLOBAL SETTLEMENT. PALESTINIAN OPPOSITION AND THE RELATIVE LACK OF OTHER ARAB AND SOVIET DISAPPROVAL OF THE ACCORD HAVE

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BEEN UNDERLINED. COMMUNIST L'HUMANITE AND LEFTIST

LIBERATION PREDICTABLY ASSAILED THE AGREEMENT.

2. LE FIGARO: "...AMERICA IS NOW DEEPLY ENGAGED IN THE MIDDLE EAST ... IF A BLOW FELL, THE U.S. WILL BE IMPLICATED ALMOST AUTOMATICALLY IN AN EVENTUAL CONFLICT... IF KISSINGER WAS ABLE ... TO TAKE SUCH MEASURES ... IT WAS NOT WITHOUT THE TACIT APPROVAL OF THE USSR... THIS CONNIVANCE OF THE TWO SUPER-POWERS ONLY GIVES MORE VALUE TO THIS INTERMEDIARY ACCORD."

3. LE QUOTIDIEN: "IN ITS FORM AS IN ITS CONTENT ... THE ACCORD IS MORE A MILITARY THAN A POLITICAL ONE. UNDOUBTEDLY, IT CONTAINS CLAUSES OF A POLITICAL NATURE BUT THESE ARE SECONDARY. IT IS NOT A TREATY OF NONBELLIGERENCE, IT IS A BARGAIN IN WHICH THE STAKES ARE THE PRECISE REDISTRIBUTION OF MILITARY DATA... THE ACCORD INITIALED YESTERDAY CAN IN NO WAY BE AN END IN ITSELF. IT WILL HAVE NO VALUE IF THERE IS NO FOLLOW-UP. IT IS TO THIS TASK THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE WILL REDOUBLE HIS EFFORTS... BUT THE PALESTINIANS ARE STILL THERE AND IN THEIR HANDS IS ONE OF THE KEYS TO THE FUTURE OF THE MIDDLE EAST."

4. L'AUREORE: "... SADAT HAS BEEN ABLE TO CHOSE THE AMERICAN INTERVENTION WHILE AT THE SAME TIME, REJECTING SOVIET INTERFERENCE. HE HAS CERTAINLY UNDERSTOOD THAT ONLY WASHINGTON COULD EXERCISE STRONG ENOUGH PRESSURE OVER ITS ISRAELI ALLY TO OBLIGE IT TO ACCEPT THE UNEQUAL EXCHANGE 'OF A BIT OF PEACE FOR A BIT OF LAND'. A MASSIVE TRANSFUSION OF DOLLARS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CEASE-FIRE LINE SERVED TO REDUCE THE LAST SCRUPLES... BUT THERE IS A REASSURING FACT: THE EASE OF RUSSIAN EXPANSIONISM IN THE EAST HAS SUDDENLY BEEN SMASHED. WHAT PRICE HAS THE U.S. PAID TO GET THIS BRAKING EFFECT?... IS IT ONE OF THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE ELEMENTS OF THE HELSINKI ACCORD: THE CONSECRATION OF SOVIET CONQUESTS IN EUROPE IN EXCHANGE FOR ITS RETREAT FROM THE MIDDLE EAST?... BUT ONE CAN BE ASSURED THAT AFTER HAVING ACCEPTED THIS ECLIPSE, INEVITABLY PROVISIONAL, THE USSR WILL TAKE UP AGAIN, WITH ITS LEGENDARY

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OBSTINANCE, THE IRREVOCABLE PROGRESSION IN THE EAST. IT WILL DEPEND MAINLY ON THE ONLY FORCE OPENLY HOSTILE TO THE 'PAX AMERICANA': THE PALESTINIANS, CURIOUSLY FORGOTTEN, FRUSTRATED IN THEIR WAR AND MATERIALLY DEPENDENT ON THE OIL PRODUCERS WHO ARE SLOWLY MOVING AWAY FROM THREATENING A WAR OR ANOTHER OIL EMBARGO...."

5. LES ECHOS: "THE VICTORS IN THIS OPERATION ARE THE

AMERICANS. NOT ONLY HAVE THEY ROLLED BACK SOVIET
INFLUENCE IN THE REGION BUT THEY HAVE ALSO DIMINISHED
THE RISKS OF AN OIL EMBARGO AND SUCCEEDED IN SURVEYING
THE OIL FIELDS OF THE MIDDLE EAST FROM CLOSE UP....
AS A PRICE FOR ITS TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS, ISRAEL WILL
RECEIVE FROM THE U.S. AN ECONOMIC AID OF 2.5 MILLION TO
COMPENSATE THE GIVING UP OF THE ABU RODEIS OIL FIELDS.
GROSSO MODO, UNCLE SAM HAS SPENT THREE BILLION

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DOLLARS... WHICH WILL COME BACK INTO THE U.S. IN THE
FORM OF ORDERS FOR MILITARY HARDWARE."

6. L'HUMANITE: "ITS TRUE THAT THE TEXT IN QUESTION
DOES NOT MAKE THE SLIGHTEST ALLUSION TO THE UN DECISION

OF NOVEMBER 23, 1974 UNDERLINING THAT 'THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE ARE AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST'.... THIS GRAVE OMISSION SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISING. MR. KISSINGER IS THE OPPOSITE OF A PEACE PILGRIM. HE DID NOT COME TO TEL AVIV AND ALEXANDRIA TO DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND THE ARAB PEOPLES IN GENERAL, BUT TO THEIR DETRIMENT TO REINFORCE THE IMPERIALISTIC POSITIONS OF THE AMERICANS.

"CAN THE ARAB PEOPLE FORGET, IN THIS CONTEXT, THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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THE AID OF THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WAS A DETERMINING FACTOR IN SAFEGUARDING THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND SATISFYING THEIR LEGITIMATE DEMANDS?"

7. LE FIGARO (RAYMOND ARON)

"" ANVBODY CAN FIND GOOD REASONS TO CRITICIZE TBE ISREALI-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT, POINTING OUT THE DANGERS IT HOLDS FOR THE FUTURE, INDEED THE AMBIQUITIES IT CONCEALS. THE ONLY THING THAT COULD BE PERTINENT WOULD BE TO REFUTE THE TWO REASONED PREMISES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE: CAN ONE OR NOT ESTABLISH IN THE PRESENT CONTEXT A PALESTINIAN STATE GOVERNED BY THE PLO ON THE WEST BANK OF THE JORDAN? IN THE ABSENCE OF THIS LITTLE STEP, COULD A NON-PEACE LEAD ONCE MORE TO WAR OR NOT?.... AT OTHER TIMES, HIS SUCCESS WOULD HAVE BEEN ACCLAIMED AND THE WORLD PRESS WOULD HAVE EXALTED THE MAGICIAN. NOTHING LIKE THAT TODAY. IN ISRAEL, A NOTABLE FRACTION OF PUBLIC OPINION DENOUNCES THE ROLE HENRY KISSINGER IS PLAYING BY PLEADING THE EGYPTIAN CAUSE BEFORE THEIR LEADERS IN JERUSALEM, FORGETTING HOWEVER THAT HE IS DOING THE SAME THING WITH ISRAELI DEMANDS BEFORE PRESIDENT SADAT.

"THE EGYPTIAN DECISION HAS REDUCED THE FREEDOM OF ACTION OF SYRIA.... PRESIDENT ASSAD IS, HIMSELF, CONDEMNED TO A THREE YEAR TRUCE. HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE POLICY CHOSEN IN CAIRO."

8. LE MONDE (UNDER HEADLINE "PAX AMERICANA"):

"THE AMERICANS WILL BE ON FRIENDLY TERMS WITH THE TWO PARTIES IN THE AREA: AND THE GREATEST SUCCESS OF MR. KISSINGER IS TO TRANSFORM WHAT WAS A FEW YEARS AGO THE SPECTRE OF AN 'EAST-WEST' CONFRONTATION, INTO A 'WEST-WEST' CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TWO FRIENDS OF THE U.S. OPPOSING EACH OTHER. BUT ONE CAN ASK WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN TWO, THREE YEARS IF EGYPT, UNDER A MORE 'HARDLINE' LEADERSHIP THAN THAT OF PRESIDENT SADAT, SHOULD ENGAGE ONCE MORE IN A

POLICY OF 'CONFRONTATION' WITH ISRAEL AND DEMAND THE
DEPART OF THESE CUMBERSOME 'OBSERVERS'....

"THE SUCCESS OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAS BEEN
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FACILITATED BY THE PASSIVE ATTITUDE ADOPTED THESE LAST
MONTHS BY MOSCOW. THE USSR WHICH WAS OPENLY DELIGHTED
AT THE SETBACK SUFFERED BY MR. KISSINGER LAST SPRING,
HAS LET HIM THIS TIME PURSUE HIS MISSION WITHOUT
EXPRESSING MORE THAN A GRUMBLING DISSENT. THE REASON
FOR THIS DISCRETION IS THAT THE SOVIET UNION'S TRUMP
CARD---THE RETURN TO THE CONFERENCE AT GENEVA---HAS
BEEN SHOWN TO BE RELATIVELY IMPRACTICAL BECAUSE OF THE
RESERVATIONS OF INTERESTED ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND ALSO
BECAUSE OF THE RISKS OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF A FAILURE
OF A BADLY PREPARED CONFERENCE. MOSCOW THEREFORE
HAS NO SOLUTION TO PROPOSE: WHICH ALLOWED MR.
KISSINGER TO TAKE HIS EASE WITH HIS SOVIET PARTNER
AND RIVAL. NOT ONLY DID HE NEGLECT TO CONSULT MR.
GROMYKO IN GENEVA AS HE DID IN MARCH, BUT HE WAS ABLE
TO INCLUDE IN THE ACCORD, MORE THAN IN THE PAST, THE
PRIVILEGED ROLE OF THE U.S. IN THE AREA."
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